On-line banking

3129. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of NPAs in the Public Sector Banks as on 31st March, 2002;

(b) whether it is a fact that on-line banking is one of the answers for reducing the NPAs and Costs of our Public Sector Banks; and

(c) if so, the steps Government are taking or propose to take to introduce on-line banking in all the Public Sector Banks of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The Gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) of Public Sector Banks as on 31st March, 2001 was Rs. 54773.16 crore. The position of Gross NPAs of Public Sector Banks as on 31st March, 2002 would be available after the audited balance sheets of banks are finalised.

(b) and (c) RBI has reported that guidelines enabling the banks to offer online banking services through Internet have been issued. Some Public Sector Banks have been granted approval for on-line banking through Internet. While on-line banking may reduce costs of operation of Public Sector Banks, there appears to be no direct linkage between on-line banking and NPAs.